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Review of Jaap Jacobs and L.H. Roper (editors), *The Worlds of the Seventeenth-Century Hudson Valley* (2014)

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Published in:
AAG Review of Books

DOI:
[10.1080/2325548X.2015.1050762](https://doi.org/10.1080/2325548X.2015.1050762)

IMPORTANT NOTE: You are advised to consult the publisher's version (publisher's PDF) if you wish to cite from it. Please check the document version below.

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Publication date:
2015

[Link to publication in University of Groningen/UMCG research database](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Thompson, M. (2015). Review of Jaap Jacobs and L.H. Roper (editors), *The Worlds of the Seventeenth-Century Hudson Valley* (2014). *AAG Review of Books*, 3(3), 114-116.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2325548X.2015.1050762>

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The AAG Review of Books

ISSN: (Print) 2325-548X (Online) Journal homepage: <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rrob20>

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To cite this article: Mark L. Thompson (2015) The Worlds of the Seventeenth-Century Hudson Valley. , The AAG Review of Books, 3:3, 114-116, DOI: [10.1080/2325548X.2015.1050762](https://doi.org/10.1080/2325548X.2015.1050762)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/2325548X.2015.1050762>



Published online: 17 Jul 2015.



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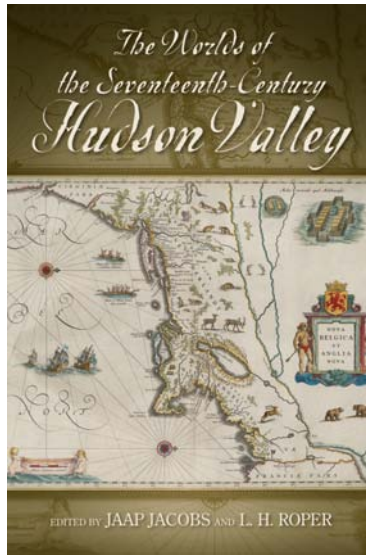


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The Worlds of the Seventeenth-Century Hudson Valley

Jaap Jacobs and L. H. Roper, eds. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2014. xi and 265 pp., maps, illustrations, notes, index. \$24.95 paper (ISBN 978-1-4384-5098-8); \$80.00 cloth (ISBN 978-1-4384-5097-1); \$24.95 electronic (ISBN 978-1-4384-5099-5).

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seventeenth-century North America and the Atlantic world. Indeed, as Games (2014) has observed, we are now in the midst of “a Dutch moment in Atlantic history” (p. 359). (Knickerbocker lives.)

Drawn from papers presented in September 2009 at the State University of New York at New Paltz, Jaap Jacobs’s and L. H. Roper’s edited collection is an expression of this convergence between the historiographies of New Netherland and the early modern Atlantic world. The authors have transatlantic origins of their own—six are American, three are Dutch, one is German, and one is French—and they share an interest in showing how intercolonial, transnational, and transoce-

anic connections shaped this space. Their contributions represent the Hudson Valley as an area of convergence for different “worlds”—European, American, colonial, and Atlantic. Divided evenly among these four parts, the twelve chapters otherwise vary considerably in length, scope, and intent. The volume nonetheless succeeds in offering itself as an “in-depth introduction and ready reference” for educators eager to engage with contemporary historical scholarship (p. ix). It will also appeal to researchers interested in the making of early U.S. regions and the application of different spatial frames and critical approaches to colonial, Native American, and Atlantic history.

Every century or so, U.S. historians take up a renewed interest in the seventeenth-century Dutch colony of New Netherland. The first and longest lasting of these revivals was set off in 1809 by the publication of a “masterful crazy quilt” of a book: Knickerbocker’s *A History of New York, from the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty* (in reality, written by a young Washington Irving; Burstein 2007, 3). Issued in the 200th anniversary year of Henry Hudson’s first voyage to North America, Irving’s “comic history of the city” was a great popular success. It also set in motion several generations of historians who sought to make (in Irving’s words) the *terra incognita* of New York’s early history not only better known but also better understood as part of the wider sweep of early U.S. history (Burstein 2007, 3). Two hundred years after the publication of *A History of New York* and 400 years after Hudson’s voyage, a new generation has taken up Irving’s call to raise “a noble superstructure” on Knickerbocker’s foundation (Irving 1809, xxv). During the last decade, New Netherland has been the subject of a number of important and innovative works and it has acquired a central place in a variety of new work about

The volume opens with two chapters by the editors on the beginnings of Dutch and English colonial expansion in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, which serve as a leaping-off point for Kees Zandvliet’s examination of Dutch cartography and identity during the same era. The next three chapters on “American Worlds” shift

their attention to the Hudson Valley and mark a shift in the emphasis of the volume as a whole. Beginning with these chapters and extending through much of the rest of the book, native peoples in and around the Hudson Valley frequently take center stage. Timothy J. Shannon's chapter begins, for example, with three origin stories about the Hudson Valley in which trade between Europeans and natives played a crucial role. Later English conquest and British settlement turned this commercial frontier into a military frontier, one where the Iroquois continued to exert their influence until the end of the eighteenth century. Paul Otto and Jon Parmenter consider a similar set of questions but orient their accounts differently. Otto's chapter offers a short but essential account of the "wampum revolution" in eastern North America. As he notes, although wampum had its origin in native practices and networks of exchange, its production, use, and meaning took on very different forms once Europeans entered the Hudson Valley. Wampum "became a product of intercultural, Atlantic-world forces, and the traditional wampum producers . . . became participants of this broader Atlantic world" (p. 96). In his longer and heavily annotated chapter, Parmenter employs the Iroquois oral tradition of *kaswentha*, symbolized by a "Two Row" wampum belt, to examine relations between the Iroquois and the Dutch until 1664. He defines *kaswentha* as "a separate-but-equal relationship between two entities based on mutual benefit and mutual respect for freedom of movement" and argues that this concept not only shaped diplomatic agreements between the Iroquois and the Dutch from as early as 1613 (a subject of some controversy), but also guided their later negotiations with the English and French. In fact, Parmenter suggests it offers "a renewable model for repairing indigenous-settler relations in contemporary North America" (p. 107).

The importance of native peoples' agency carries through the chapters in "Colonial Worlds," as well. Quoting Canadian historian John Reid at the end of her chapter on the founding of New France, Leslie Choquette asserts that "seventeenth-century North American history 'is primarily aboriginal history'" (p. 144). Employing a series of insightful maps to illustrate his narrative, Lauric Henneton offers a parallel account of a parallel region, the Connecticut Valley, a "geopolitical hotspot" contested by various Dutch, English, and native nations during the mid-seventeenth century (p. 170). Here again, wampum and furs came together to define relationships between assorted peoples converging on a single space. In her brief chapter on Indian-European networks (in "Atlantic Worlds"), Claudia Schnurmann expands on the themes of Otto's and Henneton's chapters to argue that use of

wampum first helped to establish "an American system of trade" and then "to create an Atlantic economic trade network" that bound together native nations and European colonies alike (p. 230).

The Dutch come back into the foreground in the three remaining chapters. In his second contribution, Jacobs considers the push and pull factors affecting immigration to New Netherland, which lagged behind its English neighbors in attracting settlers. Meanwhile, Willem Frijhoff's chapter challenges contemporary assertions that "the American value of toleration is a Dutch legacy," concluding that toleration is a social practice rooted in local conditions (p. 200). Joyce D. Goodfriend ends the volume with a call to expand "diversity" beyond the Europeans at the center of Jacobs's and Frijhoff's chapters to include the "African immigrants" who (were) settled in the seventeenth-century Hudson Valley at the same time (p. 243). A broader, more inclusive view of immigration, she asserts, would provide "a truer picture of the peopling of New Netherland and a firmer foundation on which to graft the history of New York and the nation" (p. 249).

Goodfriend's eagerness to connect the histories of New Netherland, New York, and the United States reminds us that Knickerbocker's legacy endures. At the same time, it is also apparent that as the number of historical "worlds" multiply, historians seem less likely than ever to agree on what stories to tell or how they ought to tell them. So even as Goodfriend calls for a more cosmopolitan history of U.S. immigration, Parmenter notes that the democracies of the United States and Canada remain "settler regime[s]" (p. 121) and Shannon observes that the Hudson River only turned into "the nation's main street of getting and spending" after the Americans dispossessed the Iroquois (p. 81). Meanwhile, Henneton cautions that the Atlantic world "should not be considered exclusively or apart from other oceanic worlds" (p. 187). Ever wider spatial frameworks might offer additional contexts but they might not be able to resolve such fundamental differences in perspective; the variety of scales and viewpoints only emphasizes how incommensurable these "worlds" could be. On the whole, however, this volume, like Knickerbocker's, embraces the diversity of experiences embedded in the history of the Hudson Valley. It, too, raises many provocative questions in an accessible and engaging manner. If this wide-ranging collection is any indication, those teaching and studying the seventeenth-century Hudson Valley will continue to have much to do until the next centennial.

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